

REMARKS

This communication is submitted in response to the Advisory Action dated October 30, 2006. The purpose of this communication is to place the subject application in condition for allowance by cancelling the single claim that was rejected on the basis of prior art in the final Office Action and by amending the claims that were objected to in the final Office Action in order to overcome the objections.

Claims 1-9 and 11-26 are pending in the subject patent application, with claims 1, 5 and 11 being amended herewith and claim 10 being cancelled herewith. Claims 2-4, 6-9 and 12-26 have not been changed relative to their immediate prior version. The effect of this amendment is to place the subject application in condition for allowance, without raising any new issues that would require further consideration and/or search. Accordingly, the amendment should be entered.

Reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-9 and 12-26 stand allowed by the Examiner, with objections being raised with respect to claims 1 and 5 on account of an extraneous space being present before a semicolon in each of the claims and with respect to claim 11 for its dependency on a rejected base claim and for the presence of a colon and a period at the end of the claim. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended herewith to delete the extraneous space from the claims, and claims 1 and 5 as amended are submitted to overcome the objection raised by the Examiner. Claim 11 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and, accordingly, claim 11 has been amended


herewith to be rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim, there being no intervening claims, and to delete the extraneous colon at the end of the claim. Therefore, claim 11 as amended is submitted to overcome the objections raised by the Examiner and should now be in condition for allowance.

The rejection of independent claim 10 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0031916 A1 to Bennett et al is moot in view of claim 10 having been cancelled herewith.

A petition for an extension of time is submitted herewith along with the requisite fee. A Notice of appeal is being filed concurrently herewith.

In light of the foregoing, the subject patent application is submitted to be in condition for allowance with claims 1-9 and 11-26. Action in conformance therewith is courteously solicited. Should any issues in the subject application remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen M. Gerken
Registration No. 31.161

EPSTEIN & GERKEN
1901 Research Boulevard, Suite 340
Rockville, Maryland 20850
(301) 610-7634

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop: Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on January 5, 2007.

Ann L. Shebovsky